

Dear FCC regulators,

I really thought I had heard everything this campaign season. But Sinclair Broadcasting's use of its power and wide range to air an anti-Kerry documentary and call it news is beyond belief. Of course the filmmaker has the right to make the film and air the film. Of course stations could decide to do so. Of course groups could pay to run the film as an ad.

But to require stations to play the film (where is the integrity of stations being able to determine their own content?), to call the film "news" (where is the integrity in such a label?), is beyond fair, is beyond the first amendment. In fact, we're into George Orwell's world, where the Fourth Estate is owned by a few corporations and subject to government control.

I am dismayed by the Sinclair Broadcasting Company's attempt to, in effect, use news stations to give a campaign contribution to George Bush. I am dismayed by their attempt to blur even further the line between news and propaganda.

Such actions are not in the public interest. Such actions are not in the service of democracy. Such actions are a disgrace.

We need to strengthen media ownership rules. We need to get the bottom line out of news and put the democracy back in. I am counting on you to speak for me, for local communities, for fair play. Thank you.

Sincerely, Beth Daugherty